

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing Of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A control method for controlling an image pickup apparatus in an image delivery system that delivers images acquired from the image pickup apparatus to at least one of ~~multiple~~ external devices, the image pickup apparatus being remotely controllable by the ~~multiple~~ external devices, the method comprising:

controlling the image pickup apparatus based on a schedule which includes one or more sets of control data to control the image pickup apparatus and a priority level of authorization to control the image pickup apparatus for each of the sets;

comparing, in a case where a request for remotely controlling the image pickup apparatus is received from one of the ~~multiple~~ external devices ~~during when~~ the image pickup apparatus is controlled based on the schedule, a priority level of the requesting external device with the priority level of the set of control data used at the time when the request is received;
[[and]]

inhibiting remote control of the image pickup apparatus by the requesting external device if the priority level of the set of control data is higher than the priority level of the requesting external device as a comparison result[.]; and

allowing the requesting external device to control the image pickup apparatus if the priority level of the set of control data is lower than the priority level of the requesting device as a comparison result.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The control method according to claim 1, wherein upon the inhibiting of remote control, remote control of the image pickup apparatus by the requesting external device is permitted if the priority level of the set of control data is lower than the priority level of the requesting external device as a comparison result.

Claim 3 (canceled).

Claim 4 (previously presented): The control method according to claim 2 further comprising forcibly stopping control performed based on the schedule if the priority level of the requesting external device is higher than the priority level of the set of control data as a comparison result.

Claim 5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (original): The control method according to claim 1 further comprising:

detecting presence of an abnormality based on an image acquired from the image pickup apparatus during the control performed based on the control data; and

saving the image acquired from the image pickup apparatus when any abnormality is detected.

Claim 7 (original): The control method according to claim 6, wherein an abnormality is detected based on difference between frames of the image.

Claim 8 (original): The control method according to claim 1, wherein the control data includes at least one of a zoom value, a pan control value and a tilt control value of the image pickup apparatus.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The control method according to claim 1, wherein a tracking operation is performed for an object moving in an image acquired from the image pickup apparatus during the control performed based on the control data.

Claim 10 (currently amended): An image delivery apparatus that delivers images acquired from an image pickup apparatus to at least one of ~~multiple~~ external devices, the image pickup apparatus being remotely controllable by the ~~multiple~~ external devices, the image delivery apparatus comprising:

a data storage medium that stores a schedule which includes one or more sets of control data to control the image pickup apparatus and a priority level of authorization to control the image pickup apparatus for each of the sets;

a schedule execution unit that starts control of the image pickup apparatus based on the schedule;

a comparison unit that compares, in a case where a request for remotely controlling the image pickup apparatus is received from one of the ~~multiple~~ external devices ~~during~~ when the image pickup apparatus is controlled based on the schedule, a priority level of the requesting external device with the priority level of the set of control data used at the time when the request is received; [[and]]

a restriction unit that inhibits remote control of the image pickup apparatus by the requesting external device if the priority level of the set of control data is higher than the priority level of the requesting external device as a comparison result[[.]]; and

a control unit that executes the remote control of the image pickup apparatus by the requesting external device if the priority level of the set of control data is lower than the priority level of the requesting external device as a comparison result.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The image delivery apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said restriction unit does not inhibit remote control of the image pickup apparatus by the requesting external device if the priority level of the set of control data is of the set of control data is lower than the priority level of the requesting external device as a comparison result.

Claim 12 (canceled).

Claim 13 (previously presented): The image delivery apparatus according to claim 11 further comprising a unit that forcibly stops control by said schedule execution unit if the priority level of the requesting external device is higher than the priority level of the set of control data as a comparison result.

Claim 14 (canceled).

Claim 15 (original): The image delivery apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising:

a detection unit that detects presence of an abnormality based on an image acquired from the image pickup apparatus during control by said schedule execution unit; and

a saving unit that saves the image acquired from the image pickup apparatus when any abnormality is detected by said detection unit.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The image delivery apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said detection unit detects an abnormality based on difference between frames of the image.

Claim 17 (original): The image delivery apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the control data includes at least one of a zoom value, a pan control value and a tilt control value of the image pickup apparatus.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The image delivery apparatus according to claim 10, wherein a tracking operation is performed for an object moving in an image acquired from the image pickup apparatus during control by said schedule execution unit.

Claim 19 (original): A storage medium readable by a data processing apparatus, the storage medium storing a program which is executable by the data processing apparatus and comprises program codes realizing a control method described in claim 1.

Claim 20 (original): A storage medium readable by a data processing apparatus, the storage medium storing a program which is executable by the data processing apparatus and comprises program codes which causes the data processing apparatus to function as an image delivery apparatus described in claim 10.